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ABSTRACT

Few researchers have examined employee attitudes toward affirmative action and equal employment programs. To examine both the attitudes of various groups within one organization toward Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and ideas concerning specific programs suggested by these same groups, corporate employees (N=1,791--or 53% of those surveyed) completed a survey of demographic information, and a number of attitude measures. Within each job, subgroups of females, minorities (male and female) and nonminority males were identified. Mean scores for different groups were computed. Results indicated that while females and minorities had relatively positive attitudes toward EEO, they were not uniformly open to special programs within the organization. Results also showed that the majority population (nonminority males) held relatively negative EEO attitudes, indicating that special programs may not be well received. The findings suggest that females and minorities would like to believe they have been selected because of their skills and they may view promoting special programs as another reminder that they are not truly part of the organization. Nonminority males may view special programs as "reverse discrimination." (PAS)

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Organizational Integration:

Attitudes Toward Sex or Race Related

Programs Within One Organization[1]

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Organizational Integration: Attitudes Toward Sex or Race Related Programs Within One Organization

An Equal Employment Opportunity scale and an open-ended question concerning special programs for females and minorities were administered to 1,791 male and female employees of a large corporation. Examination of the data suggests that while females and minorities hold somewhat positive attitudes toward EEO in general, specific programs within organizations could elicit mixed reactions

Much research has been conducted on the integration of females and minorities into the workplace (see Terborg, 1977; Riger and Galligan, 1980). Until recently (Barclay and Fields, 1982; Chacko, 1982), few researchers have examined attitudes toward affirmative action and equal employment programs.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) compliance was designed to protect subgroups from discriminatory practices. While various test fairness models have been examined for their effects on fair selection standards, and numerous guides have been written for management practitioners [Hayes, 1980; Kandel, 1977], little formal research has been done on employee attitudes to EEO.

Chacko (1982) has conducted one of the few studies on attitudes toward EEO. His study concentrates on women managers. The study examined whether these female managers perceived sex to be an important factor in their selection. Those who did think sex was an important factor, displayed less satisfaction and commitment.

Barclay and Fields (1982) extended research in the area by examining both person and situation variables. They found that a female's orientation toward appropriate roles for women and the female's job type (traditional vs. non-traditional) had to be considered when assessing attitudes toward EEO. They found that non-traditionally oriented females in traditional jobs had significantly more positive attitudes toward EEO than traditionally oriented females in non-traditional jobs. They also found that there were no significant differences in attitudes toward EEO for traditionally oriented females in traditional jobs as compared to non-traditionally oriented females in non-traditional jobs.

In a recent article, Milkovich and Krzystofiak (1979) state that: "Equal opportunity in employment, a noble policy, must be translated into specific programs and behaviors; intentions must be translated into actions to achieve desired results (p. 359)." This paper examines both the attitudes of various groups within one organization toward EEO and ideas concerning specific programs suggested by these same groups.

Method

Subjects

The subjects of this investigation were 1,791 employees who had completed a survey at a large corporation. These 1,791 respondents represented 53% of the total number of surveys mailed. The majority sample (non-minority males) was selected randomly. Greater percentages of females and minorities were sent questionnaires in order to secure sufficient numbers for comparisons. A cover letter explained the reason for the survey and that individual responses were to remain confidential. The subjects were told that the organization would be provided with only summary reports in which individual identity would be protected.

In addition to various demographic items, respondents were asked to complete a number of measures.

Measures

Attitudes Toward Equal Employment Opportunity. Respondents were presented with ten statements concerning Equal Employment Opportunity (see Appendix A). These statements were both positive and negative. Respondents were asked to

check the items with which they agreed. In order to compute a score for a respondent's attitude toward EEO, scale scores for each of the items were computed via Thurstone scaling [Torgerson, 1967]. Item scale scores were computed on the basis of item rank ordering done by ten judges (graduate students). Matrix transformation was employed in order to compute scale values. An individual respondent's score was based on the sum of the scale values for the items checked divided by the number of items the respondent had checked. A positive score indicates a relatively positive attitude toward EEO, while a negative score indicates a relatively negative attitude toward EEO. The median score for the scale was .059.

Open-ended question. Respondents were also asked to respond to the following open-ended question:

> What sex related or race related programs would assist you in job success? Be as specific as possible. If you are not a minority or a female, what do you think would assist minorities or females in job success? (Please answer even if you have never had a minority or female in your facility).

Data Analysis

Mean scores for different groups were computed. Within each job, subgroups of females, minorities (male and female), and non-minority males were identified. An Analysis of Variance was used to determine whether managers and non-managers held significantly different attitudes toward EEO. An Analysis of Variance was also used to see whether there were any significant differences between the groups in general.

Content analysis was used to classify respondents' comments to the open ended question. This classification was done according to job and subgroup (female, minority, non-minority male).

Results

Table 1 presents the different groups and their mean EEO attitude score. All the minority groups had positive attitudes toward EEO. Only two of the

Insert Table 1 About Here

eight non-minority male groups had positive attitudes toward EEO and four of the seven female groups had positive attitudes.

There were no significant differences in EEO attitudes between managers and non-managers as examined in an ANOVA ($\bar{X}$ managers = .12; $\bar{X}$ non-managers =.11). There were, however, some significant differences between the groups in general. A Scheffé test indicated that the most notable of these differences seemed to be between three of the minority groups (Technical Engineering, Hourly Job B, and Hourly Job A) and several of the non-minority male groups (Technical Engineering, Systems, Salaried Job B).

Table 2 presents the number of comments made by each group in response to the open-ended question. Not all respondents chose to make comments. Some

Insert Table 2 About Here

individuals made more than one comment. The major categories used were:

> Ability/Job Responsibility. Comments indicating that the person felt success was a function of ability and taking responsibility.
>
> Education/Training. Comments indicating that the person felt one would seek appropriate educational experiences and should have various training seminars available through the organization. These training seminars were not viewed as female or minority specific in many cases.

EEO. Comments indicating that EEO law should be used and enforced.

Attitude. Comments indicating that some females and minorities need to adjust their attitudes. (i.e., Not to use gender or race as an excuse for poor performance).

None. Comments indicating that no special programs were needed.

Other. Comments which could not be classified in the other categories. These ranged from psychological therapy suggestions to child care facility suggestions to discriminatory comments.

Discussion and Conclusions

It would appear that while target groups (females and minorities) have relatively positive attitudes toward EEO, they are not uniformally open to special programs within the organization. The fact that the majority population held relatively negative EEO attitudes also indicates that "special" programs may not be well received. It may be that in the majority male groups, the incumbents feel that their futures are threatened by female or minority promotees. Those non-minority males who hold positive attitudes are those who seem to be in upper level jobs. Perhaps these employees recognize that EEO can serve a purpose that is useful to the organization.

Of the women who responded to the open-ended question, 15-23% did not want special programs. 7-26% of the minorities responded similarly. It would appear that females and minorities would like to believe that they have been selected because of their skills. Promoting special programs may be viewed as just another reminder that they are not truly part of the organization. Non-minority males, on the other hand, may view special programs as "reverse discrimination."

Various comments elicited by this survey indicate that these employees feel that training which assists in career development should be available to all. Organizations should consider these issues in their attempts to provide opportunities for females and minorities, and to more effectively utilize their human resources.

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Table 1

Average EEO Scores of Various Groups*

n	Job Category	Score
66	Hourly Job A - Females	.33
29	Hourly Job A - Males	-.04
27	Hourly Job A - Minorities	1.08
35	Hourly Job B - Females	-.14
8	Hourly Job B - Males	-.11
40	Hourly Job B - Minorities	.75
61	Salaried Job A - Females	.24
41	Salaried Job A - Males	.28
11	Salaried Job A - Minorities	.14
93	Salaried Job B - Females	-.21
97	Salaried Job B - Males	-.32
18	Salaried Job B - Minorities	.44
117	Systems - Females	-.01
94	Systems - Males	-.38
34	Systems - Minorities	.57
17	Technical Engineering - Females	.23
167	Technical Engineering - Males	-.22
158	Technical Engineering - Minorities	.66
253	Sales - Females	.11
133	Sales - Males	-.10
66	Sales - Minorities	.37
222	Sales - Managers (mostly male)	.21
4	Unidentified	

*Positive scores indicate relatively positive attitudes toward EEO, while negative scores indicate relatively negative attitudes. The median score is .059.

Table 2

Classification of Comments Made in Response

To Open Ended Question

Group	Ability	Educ. & Training	EEO	Attitude	None	Other	Total Comments
Hourly A - Female	2	11	1	Ø	15	18	47
Hourly A - Male	4	4	3	4	3	4	22
Hourly A - Minority	Ø	1	3	Ø	2	10	16
Hourly B - Female	1	7	Ø	Ø	4	14	26
Hourly B - Male	Ø	4	2	1	Ø	3	10
Hourly B - Minority	Ø	5	2	Ø	6	15	28
Salaried A - Female	2	18	2	4	7	7	40
Salaried A - Male	3	9	1	3	7	14	37
Salaried A - Minority	Ø	2	2	Ø	2	2	8
Salaried B - Female	1	20	2	1	18	30	72
Salaried B - Male	13	24	9	7	11	20	84
Salaried B - Minority	1	5	1	Ø	1	7	15
Systems - Female	2	22	7	3	26	49	109
Systems - Male	2	18	6	4	9	31	70
Systems - Minority	1	6	2	Ø	3	16	28
Tech. Eng. - Female	1	4	1	Ø	3	6	15
Tech. Eng. - Male	25	34	8	14	17	51	149
Tech. Eng. - Minority	12	12	16	3	25	45	113
Sales - Females	5	44	15	9	58	90	221
Sales - Males	20	14	4	9	20	38	105
Sales - Minority	6	5	5	6	14	18	54
Sales - Managers	27	40	3	17	39	58	184

Appendix A

EEO Attitudes

The following statements are about Equal Employment Opportunity Programs. Please check the statements which most accurately reflect your feelings. You may check as many or as few as you wish, however, we want your candid and accurate personal opinion even if it contradicts widely held opinions.

Equal Employment Opportunity programs . . .

_____ provide the same opportunity for everyone to get a job.

_____ are hard on the employer, because of the costs of administering the programs.

_____ are not well-administered, too much red tape.

_____ help stop discrimination.

_____ are unnecessary, because people with ability can progress regardless of race of sex.

_____ quotas force organizations to hire people for jobs for which they are not qualified.

_____ sometimes end in costly court cases when there has been no discrimination.

_____ have caused "reverse discrimination."

_____ provide equal pay for work of equal value.

_____ provide advancement and versatility in organizations for minorities and women.